

Meeting Minutes

Media and Communications Committee

Location: Fire Conference Room
3:30 p.m., Thursday, June 26, 2008

1. **Welcome and Introduction.** Chairwoman Leslie Daigle convened the meeting at 3:30 p.m. The following persons were in attendance:

Committee members

- Council Member Leslie Daigle (Chair)
- Council Member Keith Curry
- Council Member Nancy Gardner
- Don Boortz
- Dan Wampole

City Staff

- Tara Finnigan, Public Information Manager
- Marilee Jackson, Public Information Officer
- Aaron Harp, Assistant City Attorney
- Steve Badum, Public Works Director
- Paul Malkemus, IT Manager
- Kim Rieff, Department Assistant

2. **Approval of Minutes**
The April 9, 2008, minutes were approved after corrections. The June 18, 2007, and the May 29, 2008, minutes were also approved.

3. **Public Comments**
No Comments

4. **Communication Activities Update (Communication Plan/Council Priority)**
Ms. Finnigan discussed the website redesign project. She distributed a handout showing the link to the website RFP, other City/Agency Websites and examples of government website design consultants. She said Mr. Malkemus released the RFP for the website project on Tuesday. Staff has talked with Vision and Civica. Civicplus does a lot of City websites and they are an affordable website provider.

5. **Discussion Items -**
Project Light Speed
Mr. Badum said the City started working with AT&T on their project application, *Light Speed*, to provide bundled TV services in competition with satellite and cable. Their application needs more information on the construction, scheduling, locations and technical justification on the feasibility of undergrounding before staff can consider it. Staff has concerns about the number of above-ground boxes and the political impact it may have. Mr. Harp said many companies could be competing for the right-of-way. Council Member Curry stated that he has a small amount of AT&T stock and recused

himself from the discussion. Mr. Badum said the City needs to make a decision whether only certain parts of town will receive it. Council Member Gardner said she doesn't think this is ready for a Study Session.

Speech-to-Text Technology Update

Mr. Malkemus further researched this technology and said he focused on voice recognition software applications. They all work on the same principals. They basically recognize voice patterns and translate that into text. The applications are more geared towards personal use and not meeting situations.

Media Policy

Ms. Finnigan said the policy is divided into three separate sections: Designated Spokespersons, Release of Information governing how information is released and Overall Guidelines on how staff handles media relations.

Print and Broadcast Media Spokespersons

Ms. Finnigan said the spokespersons are clearly defined in this policy. The Library has a staff member who handles their public information and media relations. Chairwoman Daigle asked whether the Public Information Manager and the City Manager should be notified when that person sends out information. Ms. Finnigan responded yes and that the more sensitive issues are to be handled by the City Manager, Assistant City Manager and Department Directors.

Release of Information

Ms. Finnigan said news releases should be sent to the Public Information Manager before they are sent to the public to be checked for grammar, accuracy and style. Fire and Police are the exception because they distribute information 24/7. All departments should use a standard format and the City Manager and Public Information Manager should always be copied on news releases.

Ms. Finnigan said sensitive or controversial material should always go to the City Council and the Mayor prior to release.

Ms. Finnigan said any information written or spoken that is released to the media should be communicated to the City Manager, the Department Head and the Public Information Manager.

In response to Mr. Boortz, Ms. Finnigan said she was uncertain if the City had ever conducted training for employees on how to deal with the media. Mr. Boortz recommended training for the employees. Council Member Gardner agreed.

Ms. Finnigan said Federal or State law must be followed when we communicate things that pertain to our public communication.

Guidelines

Ms. Finnigan said the issues being discussed are specifically litigation, personnel, and election issues. This includes:

- private employee information;
- disciplinary actions;
- closed sessions of City Council;
- law enforcement records;
- fire and EMS records;
- matters related to internal and external security;
- privileged communication records and work products of the City Attorney or special counsel or and draft correspondence and anything pertaining to litigation.

Council Member Gardner replied she liked the bulleted points because it's very clear where to go for these sensitive issues.

Ms. Finnigan said general and routine media requests allow staff the flexibility to confirm some facts and get the call handled. Crisis or emergency community situations will revert over to EOC plan.

Regarding an update on NBTv, Ms. Jackson said a maintenance and service contract with A-VIDD for NBTv's transmission and playback system equipment only, will start July 1st for the 2008-09 fiscal year. The contract does not cover technical assist for the non-linear editing equipment, the COMPIX character generating equipment or robotic cameras and a separate professional services contract will need to be incorporated into the 2009-10 fiscal year budget for those elements of NBTv.

6. Items for Next Agenda

NBTv Policy
AT&T Update

7. Adjourn & Set Next Meeting Date

The next meeting will take place on either July 23rd, 24th or 25th at 3:30 p.m. This meeting was adjourned at 4:30 p.m.